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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for building and reinforcing character development in order to increase appropriate student-to-student and student-to-teacher behaviors. The targeted population consists of primary and intermediate elementary students in a growing middle class community in Elk Grove, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. The problems of inappropriate interactions and lack of good citizenship were observed and documented through behavior checklists, anecdotal records, and journal responses. Analysis of probable cause data revealed that students lacked skills related to conflict resolution, work ethic, respect, and civic responsibilities. Other causes included the change in the family structure, a general increase in peer pressure, and inadequate adult role models. Reviews of curriculum content and instructional strategies revealed a need for a character education program that emphasized social and personal skill development. A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of a program to enhance character development for students in the targeted schools. (Author/EH)

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IMPROVING STUDENT BEHAVIOR THROUGH CHARACTER EDUCATION

by

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Field-Based Master's Program

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Abstract		i
Chapter		
1	Problem Statement and Context	1
	General Statement of Problem	1
	Immediate Problem Context	1
	Regional and National Context of Problem	10
2	Problem Definition	13
	Evidence of Problem	13
	Probable Causes of Problem	17
3	Solution Strategy	22
	Review of Literature	22
	Project Outcomes and Solutions Components	26
	Action Plan for the Intervention	26
	Methods of Assessment	28
4	Project Results	29
	Description of Intervention	29
	Presentation and Analysis	34
	Conclusions and Recommendations	37

References Cited.....41

Appendices.....43

Appendix A.....43

Appendix B.....44

Appendix C.....45

Appendix D.....46

Appendix E.....47

Appendix F.....48

Appendix G.....93

Appendix H.....95

Abstract

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Date: June 24, 1995 Site: Elk Grove Village

Title: Improving Behavior Through a Character Development Program

This report describes a program for building and reinforcing character development in order to increase appropriate student to student and student to teacher behaviors. The targeted population consists of primary and intermediate elementary students in a growing middle class community located in a suburb of a large Midwestern city. The problems of inappropriate interactions and lack of good citizenship were observed and documented through behavior checklists, anecdotal records and journals responses.

Analysis of probable cause data revealed that students lack skills related to conflict resolution, work ethic, respect and civic responsibilities. Other causes include the change in the family structure, a general increase in peer pressure, and inadequate adult role models. Reviews of curricula content and instructional strategies revealed a need for a character education program that emphasize social and personal skill development.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of a program to enhance character development for students in the targeted schools.

Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of Problem

The students of the targeted primary and intermediate grades exhibit inappropriate student to student behavior and student to teacher behavior in daily academic and social situations. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes teacher observation and survey responses.

Immediate Problem Context

School A

Targeted school A, with an enrollment of 399 students, is a suburban kindergarten through sixth grade elementary school in a large Midwestern metropolitan area. The student population of the school is 94 percent White, 3.5 percent Asian-Pacific Islander and 2.5 percent Mexican-American. Of the 399 student body, 1.0 percent of the students are from low income families and 2.5 percent have limited English Proficiency. Ninety-five percent of the students are in daily attendance. The students' mobility rate during the school year is 3.7 percent.

The faculty is comprised of thirty full time teachers and two half time teachers. There are two full time special education teaching assistants, a part time computer assistant, a library assistant and health aide. The staff is

composed of one male principal, four male teachers and twenty-six female teachers. Fifty-two percent of the teachers have a Master's Degree. Teaching experience ranges from one year to thirty-three years, with the average teaching experience being eleven years. The average salary is $45,172 and the per pupil expenditure $7,244 (State School Report Card, 1995).

The school structure is a one story K-6 building built in 1952. It houses three sections of grades kindergarten through fifth grade, two sections in grade six, and two educational resource classrooms. School A has one classroom of gifted students grades three through six and a primary enrichment program. The class size ranges from 19 to 26 with 23 being the average. District wide special education sections for Early Childhood, Autistic, Remedial Kindergarten, and Remedial First grade are housed at School A.

The curriculum uses a combination of textbooks and trade books. Science and math are hands-on programs with an emphasis on problem solving. Health curriculum is based on specific units taught at each grade level. A new math curriculum has been adopted and implemented. The social studies program is currently under review. A new reading program was implemented during the 1994 - 1995 school year. It is a literature based program which promotes Reading/Writing Workshop. In the intermediate grades reading instruction is primarily trade book based. The school is equipped with two computer writing labs with a part-time teacher assistant. After school programs include a primary Spanish class, computer exploration and Battle of the Books. Lunchtime instruction includes a twice weekly Great Books program.

School B

The population of School B is 497 students in grades kindergarten

through sixth grade, exhibit 97 percent White, 2 percent Asian, 1.2 percent Hispanic, and .04 percent African-American. Of that targeted population, 99 percent are above low income status and 3.6 percent are identified as limited English proficiency.

Attendance data indicates no chronic truants and a mobility rate of 3.9 percent. Ninety six percent of the students enrolled at School B are in attendance daily (State School Report Card, 1995).

School B is a three story kindergarten through sixth grade building built in 1929. Presently, there are 29 classrooms on three floors, two multi-purpose rooms, an auditorium, a Learning Resource Center, a computer laboratory, a Macintosh computer laboratory and several small group areas.

School B has a male principal, 37 full time and seven part time professional staff members, comprised of four males and 33 females, seven teaching assistants, three clerical assistants, and custodial staff. There are 20 classroom teachers, eight special subject teachers, and 13 support services teachers. In School B, 52 percent of the staff have earned a Bachelors of Arts or Science degree and 48 percent have a Masters of Arts of Education degree. School B has teachers with between one and 27 years experience, with the average being 14 years. The average salary is $45,172 and the per pupil expenditure is $7,244 (State School Report Card, 1995).

The target school population ratio of students to teachers is 23:1. The classrooms are divided into three half day sessions of kindergarten, three sections of grade one, three sections of grade two, four sections of grade three and three sections of grades four through six. Grades one through three are self-contained and four through six are departmentalized for science, social studies, and math. School B has three educational resource classrooms, one

classroom of gifted students grades three through six, and a primary enrichment program.

The curriculum uses a combination of textbooks and trade books. Science is an interactive program with an emphasis on problem solving. Health curriculum is based on specific units taught at each grade level. A new math curriculum has been adopted and implemented for the 1995-1996 school year. The social studies program is currently under review. A new reading program was implemented during the 1994-1995 school year. It is a literature based program which promotes Reading/Writing Workshop. In the intermediate grades a combination of trade books and basal readers are used in reading instruction. The school is equipped with a computer laboratory and a Macintosh computer laboratory staffed by a computer teaching assistant. Lunchtime instruction includes a weekly Great Books program and a monthly Student Council and Battle of the Books program. The 1995-1996 school year also added a tuition based foreign language program of instruction.

School C

The population of School C is 507 students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade. The student population of the school is 96 percent white 2.1 percent Asian, and 1.5 percent Mexican-American. Of that targeted population, 99.2 percent are above low income status and 0.4 percent are identified as limited English proficiency.

Attendance records at School C indicate no chronic truants and a mobility rate of 3.5 percent. Ninety-six percent of the students enrolled at School C are in attendance daily (State School Report Card, 1995).

The school structure is a two story K-6 building built in 1953. Presently, there are 25 classrooms on two floors, a multi-purpose room, an auditorium, a Learning Resource Center, a computer laboratory and several small group areas.

School C has a male principal, 36 full time teachers, comprised of two males and 34 females, three teaching assistants, six clerical staff, and custodial staff. There are 21 classrooms teachers, eight special subject teachers and 12 support services teachers. In School C, 50 percent of the staff have earned a Bachelors of Arts or Science degree and 50 percent have a Masters of Arts of Education degree or above. The average years of teaching experience in School C is 16 years, with a range of one year to 42 years of experience. The average salary is $45,172 and the per pupil expenditure $7,244 (State School Report Card, 1995).

The target school population ratio of students to teachers is 22:1. The classrooms are divided into four half day kindergartens, four sections of grade one, two, and four and three sections of grade three, five and six. Grades kindergarten through five are self-contained and grade six is departmentalized for science, social studies and math. School C has three educational resource classrooms and one classroom of gifted students grades three through six, with a primary enrichment program.

The curriculum uses a combination of textbooks and trade books. A new math curriculum has been adopted and implemented for the 1995-1996 school year. Science is an interactive program with an emphasis on problem solving. Health curriculum is based on specific units taught at each grade level. The social studies programs are currently under review. A new reading program was implemented during the 1994-1995 school year. It is a literature based

program which promotes Reading/ Writing Workshop. In the intermediate grades reading instruction is a combination of trade books and a basal reader. The school is equipped with a computer lab with two part time teacher assistants. After school programs include a Japanese Language Class, Battle of the Books and an Intermediate Chorus. Lunchtime instruction includes a twice weekly Great Books program and a weekly student council meeting.

The Surrounding Community

The community surrounding the targeted schools is a suburb of a large midwestern metropolitan city. It has a city form of government, with a mayor and city council, administered by a professional city manager. A large park district provides a variety of programs for community members of all ages. Additional assets are a contemporary library system, retail shopping and several corporation headquarters. Currently there is no industry.

This conservative tree lined community is a quiet place to live. The homes are older, mostly built between 1920 and 1960. A recent trend has been to replace existing older homes with larger new homes. Very little land is available for residential building. The number of housing units in the community total 13,821. Of this number, 10,985 are single family homes and there are an additional 1474 condominiums and 2,224 five-plus unit buildings. The average value of a housing unit is $203,054 and the median cost is $185,000.

The community which encompasses the targeted schools has a population of 36,175 persons. The community population is 35,225 Whites, 835 Asian or Pacific Islanders, 467 Hispanic, 8 African Americans and 5 Native Americans.

The population has 19,160 females and 17,015 males living in a land area of 6.86 square miles. None of the area is farm or rural area. The community is classified as suburban metropolitan residential. Families account for 31,975 persons living together. Two thousand twenty-seven individuals live alone and 777 in group quarters. The average household size is 2.64 persons with the median age of 41.3 years.

Table 1-1
Percentage of residents by age

17 years or less	20.4 percent
18-24 years	7.9 percent
25-44 years	27.1 percent
45-55 years	12.7 percent
55-64 years	12.9 percent
65-74 years	10.8 percent
75 years or older	8.2 percent

There are 13,406 households with a mean income of $69,775, a median income of $52,817 and a per capita income of $26,150. The community has 596 persons below poverty level.

Table 1-2
Distribution of income by household

$22,499 or less	14.0 percent
$22,500-34,999	14.2 percent
$35,000-44,999	11.2 percent
$45,000-59,999	18.2 percent
$60,000-74,999	12.4 percent
$75,000-99,999	10.5 percent
$100,000-$149,000	10.5 percent
$150,000 or more	5.8 percent

The residents of the community are active in numerous national and local volunteer organizations. The labor force of the community reflects 20,144 members with 19,374 activity employed and 3.8 percent unemployed (1991). The major employers are Lutheran General Health Care Systems, 5000, George S. May International Consulting, 600, and Xerox Corporation Administration, 400. In 1990, distribution of the labor force was as follows: wholesale 8.1 percent, retail 12.7 percent, finance and insurance 10.9 percent, construction 5.2 percent, health science 30.1 percent, transportation and public utility .6 percent, manufacturing 3 percent, business and related services 15.6 percent and other 13.8 percent.

Auto sales and service account for the largest percent (36.6) of retail sales; food is 27.4 percent; pharmaceuticals 11.6 percent; restaurants 5.4 percent; lumber and building 3.2 percent; apparel 3.3 percent; furniture 2.3 percent; agriculture 5.8 percent; manufacturing 1.7 percent; and general merchandise 2.8 percent (Toucan Valley Publication, 1993).

The community has 77 percent of students ages 6-18 enrolled in public school. Seventy-eight percent of people age 16-19 are in high school or holding a high school diploma. Approximately 95 percent of the population

over 24 years of age holds a high school diploma. Thirty-seven percent of this group hold a college degree and fourteen percent hold a graduate degree.

The school district of the targeted schools recently completed a vision statement proposing that "The District Community works together for educational excellence and will always be growing, changing, and improving." Included in the mission statement, "The purpose of the School District Community is to enable all students to achieve to their fullest potential as they develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to live successfully, socially responsible lives in a changing global society." Among the identified goals, the District states, "By the 1997-1998 school year, we will implement a plan for staff, parents, and the community to work together to help children of all ages to be socially and emotionally ready to learn" (The Long Range Plan, 1994-1999).

The school district has five elementary schools, grades kindergarten through six, and one junior high, grades seven and eight. The school district services many students who transfer within the city limits. It is a neighborhood school district with children bused to school, when necessary, to provide safety and limit crossing of arterial streets. There is a parent supported and administered lunch program in which approximately half the children participate. The district also offers a parent-funded before school care and extended day program.

The district model for class control is to be firm, fair and friendly, with the goal of providing a wholesome learning atmosphere. Staff members help students grow in their understanding of self-discipline. When a student's behavior becomes disruptive to the educational environment, the student may be removed from the classroom or referred to the building administrator. All due process rights are observed. The district goal of discipline is to lead to

improved behavior. Corporal punishment is not to be used in the district (Student Parent Handbook).

In addition to the regular curriculum classroom, the District offers physical education, music, art, gifted education and transitional program of instruction for students limited in English proficiency. Each school offers a special education and resource education program. A social worker and speech therapist are available in each school. The current reporting system is a developmental checklist for grades kindergarten through second and a letter grade report card for grades three through six, which is sent out at the conclusion of each trimester. The teachers currently have one mandatory parent conference in the fall and one optional spring conference.

Regional and National Context

The problem of inappropriate student to student and student to teacher behavior has resulted in concern at many levels. The time teachers spend on dealing with inappropriate behavior has greatly increased. Teachers at the elementary, junior high and high school level report that yearly there seems to be more bickering, teasing, fighting, name calling and other acts of unkindness among children (Kreidler, 1994).

Traditional methods of classroom management and discipline policies fail because the lives of children and the factors shaping them are very different. Due to social and economic changes, family patterns and work arrangements have been irreversibly transformed. As a result, students receive less guidance from their parents. President Bill Clinton in a recent speech discussed the importance of children living within a moral framework. He also discussed the influence on children from television, parents in the workplace and/ or families on the move (Clinton, 1994).

Disheartening signs are everywhere: the breakdown of the family, rampant greed, an omnipresent sexual culture, child abuse and the deterioration of civility in everyday life. A report from the National Research Council says that the United States is now the most violent of all industrialized nations (Lickona, 1993). The outgrowth of these changes in our society is reflected in the discipline problems present in our schools.

Faced with these issues educators sense that something must be done to reverse this trend. Researchers have found many time honored, well intended practices such as classroom lectures and group discussions have not had an effect on changing behavior. Consequently, many schools are instituting character education programs in an effort to facilitate more appropriate behavior. Lickona (1993) reports that concern over the moral condition of American society is prompting a revolution of the school's role in teaching values. He quotes Theodore Roosevelt who said, " To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society" (p. 6). In times of societal crisis educators concur that schools should not be ethical bystanders allowing negative behaviors to persist and prevail. Elam citing Ryan (1994), a professor of education at Boston University, points out public schools have in the past bent over backwards not to offend anyone about anything. To make schools inoffensive and studiously neutral, we have all but cleansed the curriculum of religious and ethical content. He further states that unless this is reversed, schools could be morally dangerous for children.

In a recent poll many Americans said they believed their local communities should agree on basic values such as honesty and patriotism that could be taught in the public schools. Some public schools are already including basic value programs such as; conflict resolution, sex education, drug

awareness and values clarification. There is also a new social movement, Communitarianism, whose family values philosophy have been endorsed by former President George Bush as well as current President Bill Clinton. Amitai Etzioni, founder of Communitarianism, feels that moral standards should be based on community consensus, but that sadly the job of instilling values in children now falls on the shoulders of the school. Today, about one half the American families no longer see it as their duty to pass along values from generation to generation. As a result Etzioni predicts, "...if we don't do this, then just as we have adults who are deficient in writing and science, we will find that adults won't have the character and values needed to be decent members of the community" (Berreth, 1993).

This contemporary issue is not without controversy. In an open letter to character educators, Lockwood (1993), a professor of education at the University of Wisconsin, warns that there is no direct link between values and moral behavior. He argues that the public should not enthusiastically endorse programs based on fallacious assumptions, and that if they do they will be doomed to disappointment. He also worries about the unlikelihood of children listening to teachers and or coaches. This indicates a need to study the effects of character education on students, with a view to reducing negative benavior and improving daily interactions in academic and social situations.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Evidence of Problem

Teachers are becoming increasingly aware of the frightening decline in basic values and the increase of inappropriate behavior among students. In order to document the extent of inappropriate student to student and student to teacher behavior in daily academic and social situations, anecdotal records consisting of referrals to the principal and social workers were noted, as well as written and oral reports from lunchroom supervisors, previous classroom and special teachers. Interdisciplinary staffing reports were also consulted.

Parents were surveyed about their children's home responsibilities and expected manners. In response to the question about a character education program, ninety-six percent of the parents overwhelmingly stated they would like the school to incorporate a values program into the daily curriculum.

In addition students were asked to rate themselves on a social skills checklist which included; personal and interpersonal factors, social reasoning skills and classroom behaviors. The results indicated 65 percent of the students surveyed also recognized a need for improved social skills.

Discipline record forms were developed by the researchers to organize data from the school principals, social workers and lunch supervisors regarding

the frequency and nature of discipline referrals. The referrals were related to contretemps in school academic or social settings. The researchers decided to include data from previous classroom and special area teachers.

Table 2-1

REFERRALS TO THE PRINCIPAL, MAY, 1995

Behaviors	Number of incidents	Number of students
Misconduct/physical fighting	18	23
Inappropriate language	21	12
Cheating/stealing/lying	6	9

Of the 45 incidents recorded during the month of May, 1995, in the three targeted schools, 87 percent dealt with a failure in relationships either between student to students or student to teachers. The remaining 13 percent were related to other social situations. Careful analysis of the referral information indicated that 80 percent of the offending students were responsible for 87 percent of the incidents dealing with a failure in relationships either between student to students or student to teachers. In addition 13 percent of the students were responsible for the remaining 20 percent relating to other situations in the school setting.

Table 2-2

REFERRALS TO THE SOCIAL WORKER, MAY 1995

Behavior	Number of incidents	Number of students
Misconduct	32	32
Poor peer and adult relations	91	72
Off task behavior	52	61

Of the 175 referrals to social workers in the three targeted schools during the month of May, 1995, 19 percent of the referred students were involved in a situation of misconduct which accounted for 18 percent of the referrals. Forty-one percent of the students exhibited poor peer and adult relationships which accounted for 52 percent of the referrals to the social worker. Forty percent of the students were engaged in off task behavior which accounted for 30 percent of the incidents referred during the month of May, 1995.

Table 2-3

REFERRALS TO THE LUNCH SUPERVISOR, MAY 1995

Behavior	Number of students	Number of students
Respects authority	65	18
Inappropriate language	85	16
Physical fighting	29	17

Of the 179 lunchroom referrals in the three targeted schools during the month of May, 1995, 36 percent of the incidents indicated a lack of respect for the lunchroom supervisors by 35 percent of the students referred. Forty-eight percent of the reported incidents were related to the use of inappropriate language by 32 percent of the students referred. The remaining 16 percent of the referrals involved 33 percent of the referred students engaging in physical fighting. Referrals to the lunch supervisors were made during supervision of a fifty-five minute lunchtime, where the teacher is not in charge.

Additional information and evidence of the need for a character education program in the three targeted schools was reaffirmed when previous classroom and special teachers were surveyed about existing student to student and student to teacher relationships. In the three targeted schools initial intervention occurs with classroom teachers. More severe and repetitive

occurrences are referred to a third party in each building, either the principal or social worker. Referrals to the principal and social worker are made by classroom teachers after intensive attempts to remediate behaviors. Ninety-two percent of the teachers responding agreed that implementation of a character education program was necessary.

Probable Cause of Problem

The literature suggests numerous underlying causes for the decline in basic values and the increase of inappropriate behavior among students. According to Whitehead (1993) if the downward spiraling of the family continues, less than half of the children born today will live continuously with their biological mother and father during their childhood. Also a growing number of children will endure family breakup two or even three times during childhood. Children living with a single parent often demonstrate emotional and behavioral difficulties. Financial burdens place an additional stress on these divided families. Economist Hewlett (1993) documents that economically disadvantaged American children encounter a degree of neglect greater than any other developed nation. One or a combination of these problems become very evident in the school setting. Family disintegration impacts the need for value education in many ways, chiefly because schools are now responsible for teaching the values for which families are not able to assume the responsibility (Bellanca, 1992).

A second impetus for schools to begin implementing character education is the lack of positive adult role models influencing the current generation of students. According to Lickona (1993) young people have been negatively affected by the wrong kind of role models at home, in the community and the

media. William J. Bennett, the author of The Book of Virtues, (1993) believes that society must recapture paradigms that we once believed in as a nation so that the triviality of mass media cannot absorb most of our students' attention and before prevalent cynicism among children makes virtues or morals seem inconsequential. This disheartening frequency of inadequate role models for children negatively affects their behavior and their relationships with peers and adults. Social learning theorists depict the connection between child and parent as the most powerful element in socializing children into the ways of society. In sound, comfortable homes throughout the world, the parent/child relationship is the strongest tool for inculcating values and moral standards. After the home, the school can be an area of influence and positivity with respect to modeling values and morality. If students like and respect a teacher, that teacher is able to maximize the effectiveness as a role model. Students must see the adults in their lives, their parents, their teachers and popular personalities as models who stand up for values without pandering for popularity. To enhance any opportunities in this area, adults need to share their viewpoints regarding honesty, respect, responsibility, tolerance and other targeted values. If the nation wants children to become adults who are willing to stand up and "be counted" for their beliefs, then these students will need to see adults as positive role models who do the same.

Current literature supports that sex and violence in the mass media is another pervasive factor which precipitates the necessity for schools to implement a character education program. Lickona (1993) is concerned about the ever growing sexual culture that prevails not only in television but movies as well, beckoning young Americans to engage in sexual activities at an early age. Children are daily influenced through the mediums of television, technology,

radio, printed materials and billboards. Due to this influence, Leming (1993) supports the need for sex education programs among adolescents and believes those programs which elicit help from peers, parents, and the community have been found to be the most effective in bringing about change from the mores or values learned from the nation's sleazy media. Mass media fertilizes the slightest weakness or inclination towards these types of behaviors. Combine these inclinations with hours spent in front of the television without adult supervision and this leaves a void in the character formation of today's youth. Ryan (1993) advocates that schools need to play a more assertive role in aiding children to discover what is good and to become individuals of character. Schools can provide the positive and nurturing atmosphere that builds character and promotes values.

Adjusting to different cultures with different value systems necessitates the need to identify universal character traits. Lickona (1993) agrees that there is a need to recover a basic morality which is integral for our survival. Additionally Lickona feels that values such as respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and civic virtue must be taught directly and indirectly to preserve our human rights. Universal norms for developing character were cited by Leming (1993) as essentially part of a four year cluster study where one of the four problems identified in the schools centered around race relations. Through a cooperative and collaborative process students and teachers agreed to universal behaviors suitable for diverse cultures. As evidenced in society, character education will significantly impact relationships among diverse cultures.

In this culture there are incredible external pressures placed on children. One of the most pervasive is peer pressure. Peer pressure is the

breeding ground for feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness which directly contributes to low self-esteem. Some schools try to counteract this peer pressure by offering special classes in raising self esteem when the real need is for character education. Some educators contend that students' self worth and moral makeup is being damaged by hollow praise and weak expectations. "Self Esteem" is something that is built up with a lot of small victories...when a child does something helpful for his grandmother, those are the things that build up self esteem" says William Damon, author of Greater Expectations: Overcoming the Culture of Indulgence in America's Homes and Schools.

Hellmich citing Sykes and Owens (1995) states, "what parents and teachers must do to promote the self esteem in children needed to resist peer pressure is to be certain that children have the skills needed to succeed academically, to get along with others and to be good decent people. Along with buttressing academic achievement, teachers and parents should send the message to our children that coping with adversity and learning to overcome difficulties are an essential part of growing up". These messages could be delivered in a values education program. Students would then be able to think for themselves, to reflect on their actions, to consult authorities and sources other then their peers, and to stand up for their own values, morals and ethical beliefs.

Etzioni (1993) states that a major challenge in our society is to influence young Americans who have been strongly influenced by their peers, especially those influenced by peers with counter values. Curvin (1993) believes that opportunities to help others may give students a way to break out of the devastating cycle of peer pressure and to replace low self-esteem with feelings of worth. Due to the negative effects of peer pressure imparted upon students

with low self-esteem, the need for character education is reinforced.

Families no longer have the time to support or model positive values, communicate expected behavior or encourage social skills. In addition, the decreased time or energy for proper supervision all contribute to students coming to schools without basic values and social skills in place.

In conclusion, the decline of the family, lack of adequate adult role models, sex and violence in the media, lack of respect amongst various cultures, peer pressure and low self-esteem are some the probable causes cited by experts. Current literature supports a strong need for character education curriculum in schools.

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

The environment in schools today is filled with a deep concern promoting a reevaluation of the school's role in value education. Schools are considering many other options which incorporate a character education program in their curriculum. One of these options is to work with corporations as well as the community to acquire or reinforce values critical to children's development. Etzioni believed that many corporations can be pressured to create a program where schools channel high school kids into approved workplaces for school credit. There would be an educational content structured in these workplaces. The number of hours the children could work per week plus the time they could work in the evening would be controlled in order for students to complete their homework. When working with high school students this program would help prepare them for jobs acquired later and teach them work ethic and responsibility (Berreth, 1993).

It would be sensible for schools and communities to work together on a value education program because the two reflect each other. Mary Jane Aquilar stated that values have to be in the community culture. Schools can

only do a part of the teaching of values, communities are responsible also. Huffman developed guidelines to consider when working with the community on developing a character education program. The guidelines include:

- Prepare an adequate communication plan between community members, school staff, and parents.
- Follow up on and continue communication throughout the program to keep enthusiasm at a high level.
- Communicate the importance of character education through employee recruitment, evaluation, and staff development.
- Do not dismiss critics quickly. Responding to critics will model to children the value of respecting others (Cohen, 1995).

Brooks and Kann believed there are certain elements that need to be incorporated in a classroom curriculum in order for a character education program to be effective. Experiences of schools in St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles and Honolulu provide strong evidence that a positive character education program needs key criteria. These key criteria include direct instruction, a language-based curriculum, positive language, content and process, visual reinforcement, a school climate approach, teacher-friendly materials, teacher flexibility and creativity, student participation, parental involvement and evaluation. Limerick School in Los Angeles incorporated these 11 elements in their curriculum and reported positive changes in classroom behavior within three months. Principal Ronni Ephraim noticed that the discipline line outside her office was virtually eliminated by the end of the school year (1993).

A program adopted by Wedgewood School in Missouri entitled Personal Responsibility Education Process (PREP) has brought great progress in positive

student behavior. The PREP program entails that the school community chooses and defines character traits to be emphasized throughout the duration of the implementation. A K-12 curriculum is then developed based on these character traits. "PREP does not promote one set of values, but gives schools a process that lets them rediscover their own values and reinforce them" (Moody and McKay, 1993). Collaboration between the school and community is the key element of the PREP program. This four year character education program is designed to strengthen student responsibility without providing a recipe.

Designing an ethics class was another approach used by a grade 6-12 boarding school in Simsbury, Connecticut. The main objective of this required class was to encourage the students to discuss values and character development. The course introduced ethics of care and justice by studying Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan. The class then looked at the ethics behind their own school rules and discussed their viewpoints. The course proceeded through many different topics which enabled students to vocalize their opinions and listen to others. These discussions were designed to help develop the students' moral reasoning skills. The education comes from the debate and exposure to a multitude of opinions and attitudes. The evaluation for this course was through papers where students had to discuss and evaluate a moral problem. The instructor for this ethics course, Richard Prager, believes this is an important course for all students to examine their own values (Prager, 1993).

Cooperative learning strategies taught in the classroom are effective in developing character. In cooperative learning situations, students are placed in groups where they are responsible for their own learning as well as the group's learning. This fosters positive interdependence among students. Literature

reviews have overwhelmingly shown that using cooperative learning has enhanced students' acceptance and mutual concern for others. This approach to learning "has resulted in impressive student achievement and positive social values and behavior" (Leming, 1993).

The American Institute of Character Education in San Antonio, Texas has developed a character education curriculum series for kindergarten through sixth grade. Posters and a set of stories that exemplify values such as honesty, kindness and generosity are what make up this curriculum. Teachers facilitate discussions based on these stories in which or where children can relate these values to their own lives. Testimonials for this program conclude that the Institute's program has yielded positive results when implemented in classrooms (Leming, 1993).

Lickona stated that the school's environment greatly affects the values and character of students. A comprehensive approach to character education in the classroom is essential in order to have a lasting effect on students' character. Lickona further stipulated that in order to have a comprehensive approach to character development the classroom teacher must:

- Act as a care giver, model, and mentor
- Create a moral community
- Practice moral discipline
- Create a democratic classroom environment
- Teach values through the curriculum
- Use cooperative learning
- Develop a strong work ethic
- Encourage moral reflection
- Teach conflict resolution (Lickona, 1993)

Project Outcomes and Solution Components

As a result of implementing procedures of a character education program, during the period of August 1995 through January 1996, the targeted primary and intermediate students will exhibit improved student to student and student to teacher behavior as measured by teacher developed checklists, student self-evaluation checklists, parental feedback form and anecdotal records.

In order to accomplish the terminal objectives, the following processes are necessary:

1. choose a character education program to implement with students
2. select materials and curriculum applicable to various teaching situations
3. develop a teacher observation checklist
4. develop a student pre and post program self-evaluation form
5. create parental feedback forms
6. develop display materials to encourage positive character development
7. decide on twice a month evaluations and modifications of the character education program

Action Plan for the Intervention

At the beginning of the first trimester each student participating in the research will individually complete a social skills self-evaluation checklist (Appendix A). Also at the start of the first trimester, parents of the targeted

students will complete a feedback form (Appendix B) regarding their child's social skills at home. In addition, parents will be asked to complete a survey (Appendix C) concerning their child's home responsibilities and the values they would like to see emphasized in the curriculum that year. These same checklists, survey and feedback forms will be administered to the targeted students and their parents at the end of the research project in January 1996.

Each week the researchers will be using a behavior checklist (Appendix D) to tally positive and negative behaviors observed in the classroom. The researchers will also be keeping a weekly journal noting activities and the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of the character education program.

All of the researchers' classrooms will feature a bulletin board dedicated to a character education theme of the month. M-charts (Appendix E) will be used and displayed for reinforcement of how monthly character themes sound, look and feel. The desks of the targeted students will be arranged in cooperative groups consisting of clusters of three to five students. Each cooperative group will have a collaborative team identifier.

Every month there will be a theme promoting character education:

- August/September- Respect/Tolerance
- October - Responsibility/Work Ethic
- November - Compromise
- December - Courage/Loyalty
- January - Culminating Activities

These monthly themes will be implemented into the curriculum using bibliotherapy, team building activities, cooperative learning activities, role playing/simulation, direct instruction, modeling, group processing and discussions. Representative lesson plans integrate each monthly theme

(Appendix F). Bibliotherapy will include teachers frequently reading aloud books pertaining to the monthly theme followed by class discussion, activities and class processing (Appendix G). Flexible cooperative learning groups will be engaged in a number of team building activities every month. The researchers will involve the targeted students in monthly role playing/simulation learning activities. Researchers' direct instruction and modeling will contribute to students' awareness of appropriate behavior. Group processing sheets will be filled out periodically to teach children the technique of self evaluation and allow them to reflect upon their learning. Discussions will give the children the opportunity to hear others' opinions and allow the children to formulate their own.

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the intervention, behavior checklists compiled by the researchers will be analyzed weekly to chart noticeable improvement. The students' August and February social skills self-evaluation checklists will be compared. August and February parent feedback forms will also be compared to identify the amount of transfer of character education values to the home setting. M-charts will be used to assess the students' knowledge of monthly themes. Group processing sheets will be examined to see the progress of the students' self-evaluation skills. Twice monthly evaluation/modification meetings will be held by the researchers as part of the assessment process. At the conclusion of the study, the researchers' weekly journals will be analyzed.

Chapter 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Description of Intervention

The objective of this intervention was to improve student to student and student to teacher behavior in daily academic and social situations. During the months of September through January the action research team members implemented strategies to promote character development using the following themes: responsibility and work ethic, respect and tolerance, compromise, courage and loyalty. Lessons were designed by researchers for targeted classes to enrich team building activities: modeling, cooperative group learning activities, role playing and simulation situations, direct instruction, bibliotherapy, discussion and group processing.

Classrooms were arranged in multiple cooperative groupings, with team names. Each teacher displayed a bulletin board exhibiting monthly themes and student generated work. Charts, photos, graphic organizers, videos, audiotapes and examples of students' work were used to facilitate positive motivation and reinforcement. Behavior checklists, teacher observation, and student reflection journals, along with researcher reflection journals and parent evaluations were utilized during the project.

At School A targeted fifth grade students (researcher #1) met in

conjunction with the fifth grade gifted reading class (researcher #2). These researchers and students worked as collaborative teams once a week for an hour during the span of the project. Researchers used a thematic approach to incorporate values from the character education program to enhance the articulated Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum. In addition, when not formally meeting, researchers #1 and #2 agreed to extend the character education program separately in their classrooms to use as an intervention when applicable issues arose.

Researchers at targeted school A state that implementing the character education program helped not only the students, but the researchers also to become smarter and better people. The researchers feel very positively about the program and will willingly undertake the project again next year. Not only did the designed curriculum easily mesh with the articulated fifth grade reading curriculum but transferred to other curricular areas such as social studies and health occurred naturally for students and teachers. All were able to make spontaneous connections with fictional and historical characters or living persons in real life, genuine situations as they emerged in different areas of the daily curriculum.

The teaching and learning environment was very advantageous. All students involved were fifth graders. Although the researchers support multi-age groupings, in this program the similar age set up was favorable. Also, the Channels of Challenge students (gifted) blended successfully with students from the regular classroom. All students benefited from the wide range of abilities and talents. The gifted students contributed creative ideas and suggestions but did not always provide the expected leadership in cooperative groups. The students from the regular classroom often designed challenging

projects which encouraged participation by all members of the groups. The researchers felt it was positive for gifted students and regular education students to see each other in such cooperative, contributory roles. In fact, since the project went so well immediately, the researchers decided that the whole group would undertake an extra project for the duration of the character education program under the aegis of the monthly theme: responsibility. The students became pen pals with senior citizens from the Center of Concern and exchanged letters and cards with these elderly persons from the Center periodically throughout the school year. Due to the many varied activities, the two student groups, as well as the researchers, looked forward to Thursdays and repeatedly discussed the projects for the rest of the week.

The researchers themselves have become active components of not only character education, but team teaching. The interchange of ideas and reciprocity of issues became more inclusive and expanded to other members of the faculty as the school year progressed. Since both researchers were working in the Field Based Masters Program, the suggestions and activities from various classes like Multiple Intelligences, Teaching For Transfer and Authentic Assessment predominated the character education program. In this way, teaching styles became complimentary as well as expansive.

School B contained the targeted fourth grade student class (researcher #3) and the targeted fourth grade Physical Education class (researcher #4). Researchers worked separately with the targeted students in the classroom setting and in a physical education class. Project implementation occurred approximately once a week, as well as in daily integrated lessons and discussions. Researcher #3 conducted a weekly class meeting on Friday afternoons to review or discuss actions and lessons covered during the week.

A suggestion box with comments from students provided a forum for discussion.

Researchers #3 and #4 worked with students to develop a crossover between subject areas relating to character development. Most often noted by the researchers was positive student to student comments concerning behavior or monthly area of emphasis. During Physical Education class this was often a compliment to a team member. At recess more student inclusion and fair play was noted by researcher #3. Researchers observed increased student to student significant positive interaction in the classroom as well.

As the project progressed and weekly class meetings were conducted, students demonstrated growth in self evaluation skills. Students commented on what they observed during the course of the week. For example, a student stated, "I saw Student A showing respect to Student B when he held the door for him." During class meetings, students and researchers discussed areas and skills that needed attention and situations where the class noted seeing progress. Students enjoyed the class meetings which the researchers saw as very productive. The meetings have continued, although the research project has been concluded.

The suggestion box helped students define goals and identify areas where positive or negative behavior could be anonymously reported. These reports were then used by the researchers to develop curriculum such as the use of a respect video which was followed by role play to help students better understand the concepts and also internalize the feelings (See page 65). In Physical Education, the use of the team concepts continued to develop an interdependence with other peers. The researcher used ideas from the suggestion box to modify curriculum, such as student designed rules or peer coaching.

School C targeted students included a first grade class (researcher #5) and a fifth grade class (researcher #6). Collaboration at this location featured a forty-five minute weekly meeting of these two classes with cross level student pairs and whole group activities. Lessons were also integrated in other curricular areas outside of the allotted time. Weekly class processing time was provided separately, employing M charts, class journals, debates and discussions.

Researchers #5 and #6 worked collaboratively once a week with their multiage first and fifth grade classes respectively for the duration of the project. Each time they met, the students were put into cooperative groups consisting of two fifth graders and one first grader or one fifth grader and two first graders. All students were randomly assigned a group role so that no role was grade specific. At times a fifth grader may have been the recorder, and at other times a first grader may have been the recorder.

These once weekly multi age meetings were beneficial for all of the students. The fifth graders felt as if they were taking on a leadership role in helping the first graders read and write. The first graders felt important because the fifth graders were listening to their opinions as well as allowing them to help with the reading and writing.

The children worked amazingly well together. The researchers noticed minimal off task behavior and no aggressive behavior within the multi age groups. Students were observed outside of class using the vocabulary terms presented during the character building lessons. For example, one fifth grader returned from recess stating that another child had shown courage by standing up for a child who was being harassed. The students all look forward to the weekly meetings. The researchers are continuing to meet together with their

classes even though the action research project has concluded.

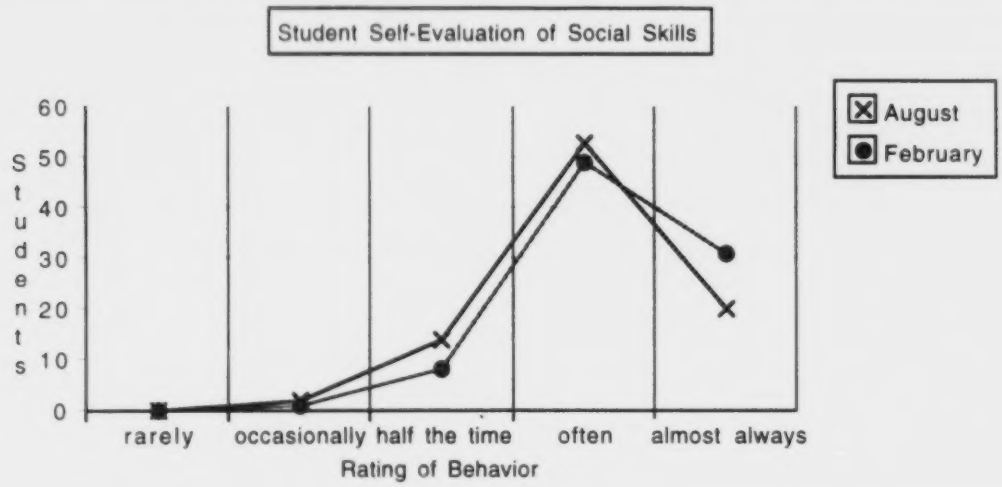
All researchers one through six met as a group bimonthly to discuss lessons and themes in progress, to share ideas and to brainstorm future plans. Researchers' journals were also shared and reflected upon. Modifications to the program were made at these meetings if needed. A suggested modification extended the lessons on courage and loyalty through the month of January due to the perceived program need.

The character education program involved complex issues as well as the needed skill development from the fifth grade reading program. It also required personal growth for the researchers in teaching practices as well as the responsibility to devise, reinforce and model persistently high standards of the monthly themes such as respect.

Presentation and analysis

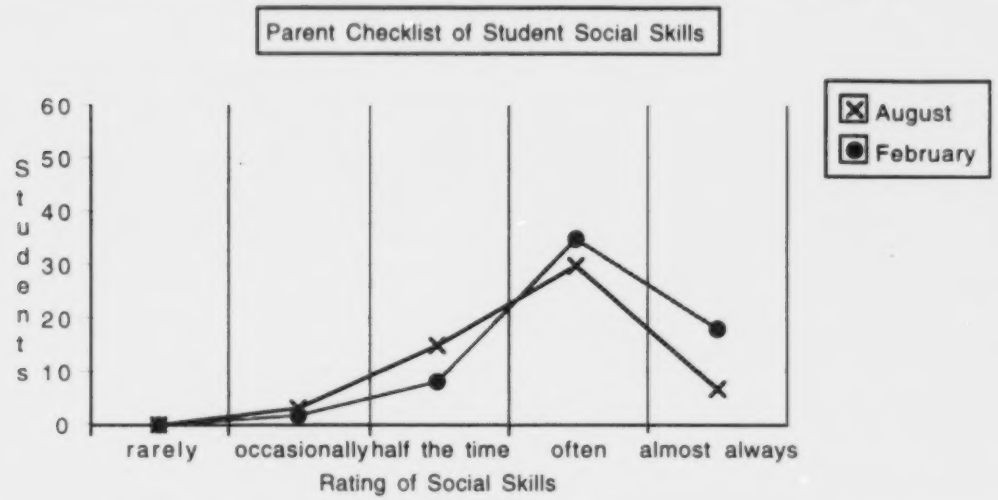
In order to assess the effects of character education, student behavior checklists were used as a weekly tool in each classroom. The researchers found that although it was a good idea to monitor the positive and negative behaviors the children exhibited, it was very cumbersome. To be more objective the observer should not be the teacher. Observation was hard to manage concurrently with teaching responsibilities. In the beginning of the project when respect was the theme, a positive incline in student behaviors was noted by the researchers; the negative tally marks decreased during the month. However, after moving on to another value theme or subject area the tally marks would increase but not to the pre project level. Throughout the action research project, the researchers discerned positive tally marks increased as the various themes were implemented.

Table 4-1



August represents the results of the student checklist completed in August, 1995 at the beginning of the project. February was completed in February,1996 at the conclusion of the action research project (Appendix H). Data indicates that students reflect improvement in behavior.

Table 4-2



August on Table 4-2 represents the parent rating of students' social skills recorded on Curriculum Night in the targeted schools August, 1995, before the onset of the project. February on Table 4-2 illustrates parental rating of students' social skills following project conclusion in February, 1996. Data indicates the monitored behaviors exhibited some improvement as noted by parents.

Social skills feedback forms from parents and students filled out in August and in February helped to provide valuable information. This information reflects growth in the skill areas of personal, interpersonal, social reasoning and home behaviors during the course of the project. The team believes the students have become more aware of appropriate social skills both in school and home. This awareness has led to a greater frequency in applying appropriate social skills in both forums.

Student feedback during class meetings reflected an increased student usage of appropriate vocabulary from the character education curriculum. Feedback also mirrored the students' ability to improve their behavior as the themes progressed. Class meetings were positive and provided an opportunity for students to share feelings and process in social skills areas. The meetings always concluded with positive goal setting.

In addition, at the conclusion of the weekly implementation all researchers strongly concurred that words such as tolerance, respect, work ethic, courage, and loyalty have become ingrained in the students' everyday vocabulary.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the information presented and analysis of the obtained data, the targeted students exhibited a slight increase in positive character and social behaviors between student to student and student to teachers. Numerically, the values discussed during the action research program appear to have made an insignificant transfer to interpersonal behaviors. However, researchers one through six concluded that through observation of attitudes, cooperative skills, vocabulary usage, values and manners, student behavior became more positive than the data showed. The data collection from the parent feedback form also indicated a slight increase in positive observable home behaviors. In general parents highly rated their children in September as well as in February. Parents also verbalized appreciation, enthusiasm and continued support for a character education program. Although the planning and implementation of the program required a great deal of energy, creativity and time, and the results were not as measurably significant as expected, the researchers conclude that

the program positively impacted students and was easily integrated into the existing district curriculum. Furthermore, the practices employed by all researchers of team teaching character education throughout all aspects of the curriculum, and the combining of various age and ability levels was beneficial to students as well as to teachers.

The researchers endorse the need for a character education program with some modifications. First, the researchers believe the implementation of the character education program should be throughout the school year. Incorporating the program for a brief period of time did not yield the observable results the researchers expected. A character education program needs to encompass the entire school year and be included in summer school enrichment. In addition, such a program must be school wide, district wide and cross curricular. Second, the researchers feel a character education program should be articulated for all grades, kindergarten through twelfth. The building of our society's system of mores taught in the school setting, should be comparable to reading and mathematics in scope and sequence with written curriculum and appropriate goals for each grade level.

In addition, the researchers acknowledge several disadvantages to the particular program undertaken for the action research. First, evidence points to some targeted students being unable to objectively or fairly evaluate behavior. As a result, the evaluation checklists are not representative of realistic starting and ending points. In addition, some parents seemed unable to rate their children in an unbiased manner. This non-impartial rating also generated a less than actual portrayal of growth. Furthermore, the researchers frequently observed that many elements of the action research program were unable to be dispassionately measured. The researchers believed theoretically that growth

and transfer had transpired but were unable to quantify the results. Also, the researchers would most emphatically recommend modification to the checklists used. Some alterations would include simpler forms, fewer items on the checklists and less tallying required for the younger students. Another issue is common to any research attempted; failure of some parents being surveyed to return forms. The disinterest of some parents was disheartening to the researchers. Non return of the forms impeded the process of measuring development and determining results.

Members of the action research team are all in agreement concerning the purchase of a character education program rather than creating lessons and curriculum. After embarking on the planned action research project, the researchers found many worthwhile, published, for purchase programs, which are cross curricular and applicable across grade levels. In the opinion of the researchers the potency of these programs is just as effective as a program written by or developed by a team of researchers. These published curriculums would be as useful and more beneficial since time allocated to the character education program would be spent on teaching rather than designing, devising or developing materials.

Despite the drawbacks encountered, the researchers are ready to continue character education next year. Members report that character education must be an element of every teaching day. Researchers feel the teaching of values must be a part of classroom rules setting, class meetings, and/or any curriculum discussion. A character education program must be comprehensive, intrinsic and drive our efforts with children. Given the profound potential to influence of educators today, and the profound potential to help students become individuals of character, how could such a program be less?

"Character is destiny" wrote the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus. Perhaps it is the destiny of schools and teachers also. Or should be according to the research team involved in this study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Student Social Skills Self-Evaluation Checklist

1-rarely 2-occasionally 3-half the time 4-often 5-almost always

Personal Factors

__ shows consideration for others
__ accepts responsibility for actions
__ expresses feelings positively
__ controls anger
__ is self-confident in strong areas

Interpersonal Factors

__ understands and helps others
__ compliments others
__ shares and cooperates with peers
__ accepts people who are different
__ actively listens while others talk
__ shows a reasonable amount of assertiveness
__ can compromise

Social Reasoning Skills

__ can resolve problems
__ can choose the best alternative
__ makes decisions thoughtfully

Classroom Behaviors

__ can work independently
__ follows classroom rules
__ does homework on time
__ is careful with property
__ listens to directions
__ completes tasks
__ uses time efficiently

Appendix B

Parent Checklist of Student Social Skills

1-rarely 2-occasionally 3-half the time 4-often 5-almost always

Personal Factors

__ shows consideration for others
__ accepts responsibility for actions
__ expresses feelings positively
__ controls anger
__ is self-confident in strong areas

Interpersonal Factors

__ understands and helps others
__ compliments others
__ shares and cooperates with peers and siblings
__ accepts people who are different
__ actively listens while others talk
__ shows a reasonable amount of assertiveness
__ can compromise

Social Reasoning Skills

__ can resolve problems
__ can choose the best alternative
__ makes decisions thoughtfully

Home Behaviors

__ can work independently
__ follows rules
__ does homework on time
__ is careful with property
__ listens to directions
__ completes tasks
__ uses time efficiently

Appendix C

Parent Opinion Survey

1. What is your child responsible for at home and how do you hold him/her accountable?

2. What type of basic manners do you expect your child to demonstrate?

3. If your child were taking part in a character/value education what would you like to see emphasized?

Appendix D

BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST

Week ____ Teacher_____

Positive comments to peers		Negative comments to peers	
Respects Property		Disrespectful toward property	
Appropriate language and manners		Inappropriate language and manners	
Positive physical contact		Negative physical contact	
Cooperative behavior		Uncooperative behavior	
Treats adults with respect		Treats adults with disrespect	
Accepts personal responsibility		Lacks personal responsibility	

Appendix E

KIND COMPLIMENTS

Monthly Theme:

SOUNDS LIKE	LOOKS LIKE	FEELS LIKE

Appendix F

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Compromise

Groupings: Cooperative groups of 5

Materials: Prior knowledge transparency- Looks Like, Feels like, Sounds Like sheet, large chart paper, markers, Plus-Minus-Interesting chart (one per group)

Action Plan:

- Cooperative groups complete Looks Like, Feels Like, Sounds Like chart
- Whole group shares ideas
- Teacher models acrostic poem asking ideas from students
- Create an acrostic poem using the word compromise and using the ideas that flow
- Display and share with group
- Give an energizer of their group's choice

Processing: Teams fill out Plus-Minus-Interesting chart focusing on the social skill of compromise

LOOKS LIKE	FEELS LIKE	SOUNDS LIKE

Plus +	Minus -	Interesting

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Compromise

Groupings: Cooperative groups of 5

Materials: Picture book for each group- Stega Nona, Pigs A Plenty Pigs Galore, Elviria, Thomas Snowsuit, Jamaica and Briana, Three Plusses and a Wish sheets

Action Plan:

- Read books
- Identify the conflict
- Identify the compromise
- Write an original rap retelling the story, focusing on the compromise
- Performed rap, video taped by teachers

Processing: Students will complete a reflection with three questions. Students will process their social group work with Three Plusses and a Wish sheet.

THREE PLUSSES AND A WISH

PLUSSES:

_____

_____

_____

WISH:

_____

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Compromise

Groupings: Groups of 3

Materials: Various books- enough for one book for each group of 4, construction paper- 3 pieces for each group, markers

Action Plan:

- Make a word web with the word compromise
- Read Bootsie Barker Bites by Barbara Bottner
- Talk about the conflict and the compromise in the story
- Put children in groups of 4
- Each group reads a book and decides on the conflict
- One group member draws the characters on the 1st piece of construction paper
- One group member draws the conflict on the 2nd piece of paper
- One group member draws the compromise on the 3rd piece of paper
- Papers are taped together in order to create a Walk-a-Story

Processing: Children share their Walk-a-Stories with other groups. They lay their stories down on the floor and "walk" the other groups through their stories explaining the characters, the conflict, and the compromise.

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Courage

Groupings: Cooperative groups for brainstorming ideas, individual product

Materials: Construction paper, markers, graphic organizer- 3-2-1 processing sheet (one for each group)

Action Plan:

- Discuss meaning of courage
- Discuss recent examples of courage, could be personal
- Discuss historical courageous people
- Design and make an award for someone from the past or in the present who they believe showed courage

Processing: Cooperative groups fill out a 3-2-1 processing sheet. This is where the groups write 3 things you learned about courage, 2 people from the past/present, and 1 way you could be more courageous.

3-2-1

Name_____

3 things I learned about courage

_____

_____

_____

2 examples of courageous people(past and present)

_____

_____

1 way I can be more courageous

_____

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Loyalty

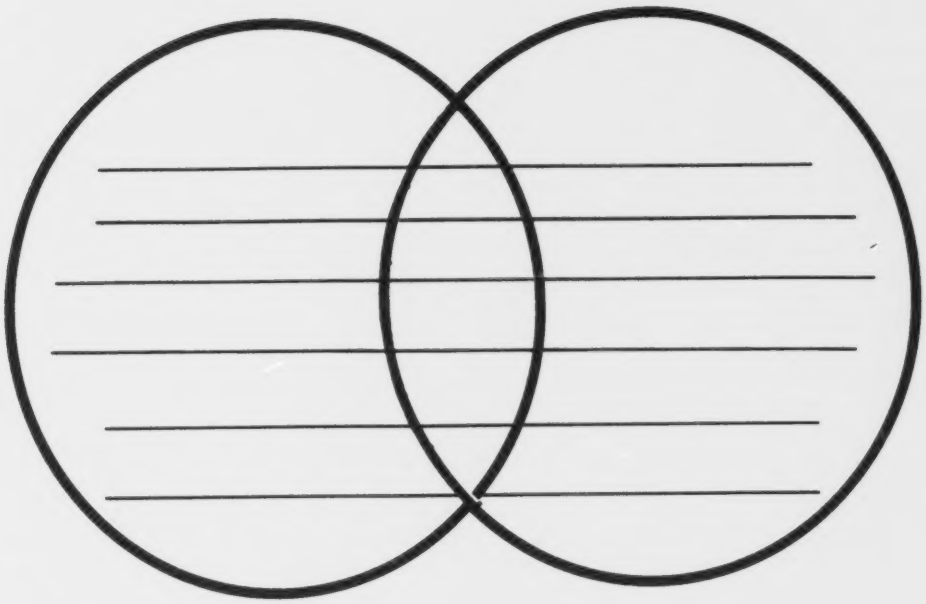
Groupings: Whole class, then individual

Materials: Poem from Paul Revere's Ride by William Longfellow and Sarah Luddington by UNKNOWN, Venn diagram (one per student), Listen, Sketch, Draw organizer (one per student)

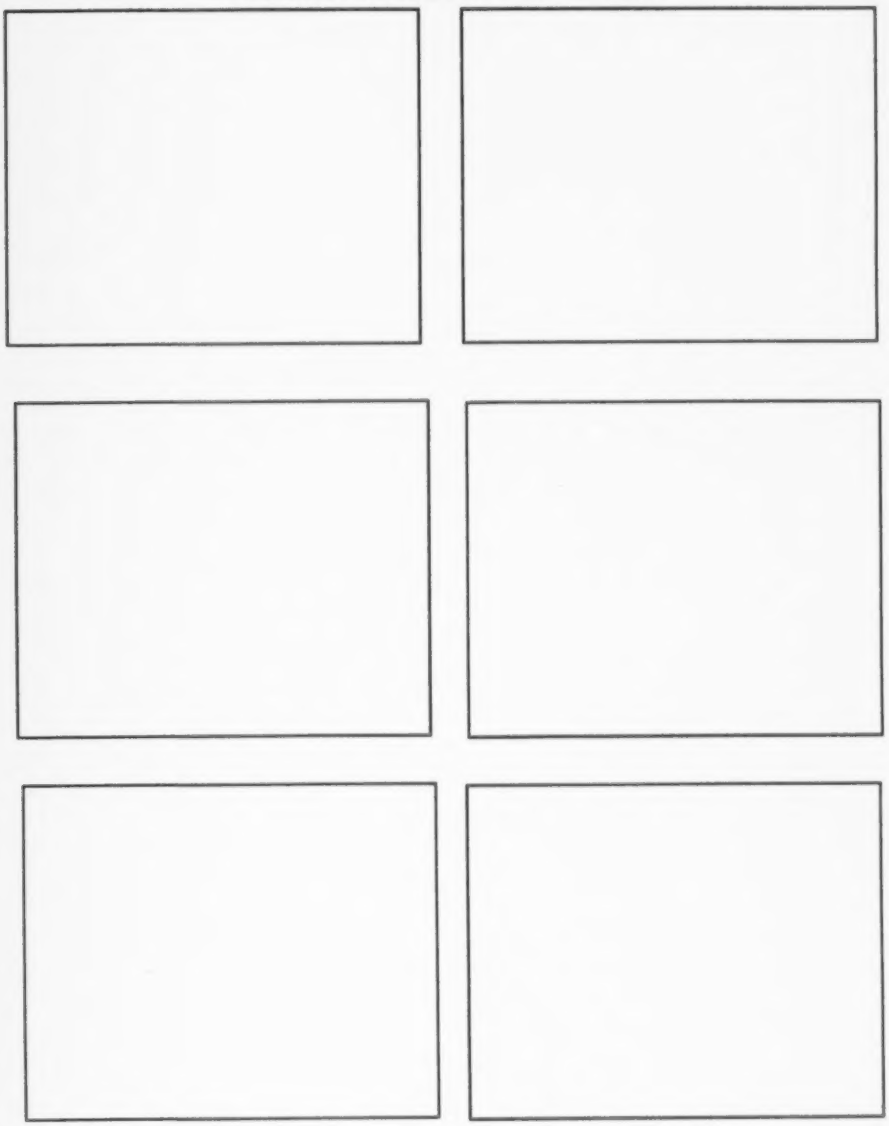
Action Plan:

- Pre-lesson- Discuss loyalty to a cause, a group, family, a friend
- Discussion of how loyalty may shift for a cause as you mature
- Teacher read aloud poems
- During read aloud, have individuals fill out graphic organizers- Listen, Sketch, Draw

Processing: Students each fill out a Venn diagram to compare/contrast the two rides and discuss



Listen Sketch & Draft



Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Courage/ Loyalty

Groupings: Whole class, then individual

Materials: Computer lab (one per student) or paper and pencil (one per student)

Action Plan:

- Have a whole class discussion on what loyal and courage mean and examples of character traits
- Go around the room and have each student explain a time when they were courageous or loyal
- Go into the computer lab and write up a paragraph or two on a time when they were courageous or loyal

Processing: When the paragraphs are finished each child reads his/her paper aloud to the rest of the class. The students are allowed to give 2 comment or ask 2 questions to the presenter.

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Respect/Tolerance

Groupings: Individual groups, cooperative groups of four

Materials: Poem: "Raggedy Girl" by Judith Viorst, from Sad Underwear and Othe Complications, 1995, Atheneum for Young Readers, on overhead, "My Favorite Clothes" sheet, personal value statement sheets, word web sheets

Action Plan:

- Children make personal value statements
- Whole group discussion on personal value statements
- Make a word web on what being different means
- Read poem "Raggedy Girl"
- Internalize the meaning of a poem by processing generic questions about poetry
- Discuss specific questions about "Raggedy Girl".

Processing: Talk about Kind Compliments and how you could make the "Raggedy Girl" feel comfortable in our class. Follow up activity: Write and illustrate "My Favorite Clothes".

Personal Value Statements

Which of these statements best describe you? Why?

1. **I like to tease and make fun of other kids.**

2. **Sometimes I make fun of other kids when my friends do.**

3. **I don't like making fun of other kids, and I seldom do.**

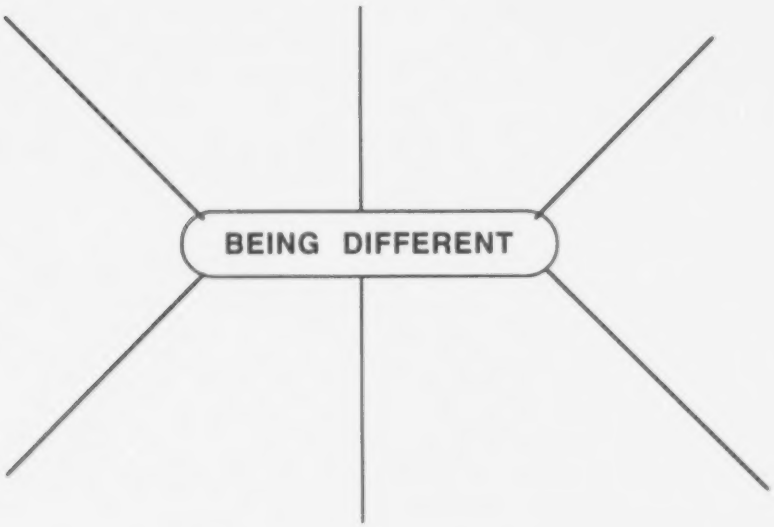
Name: _____ Date: _____

My Favorite Clothes

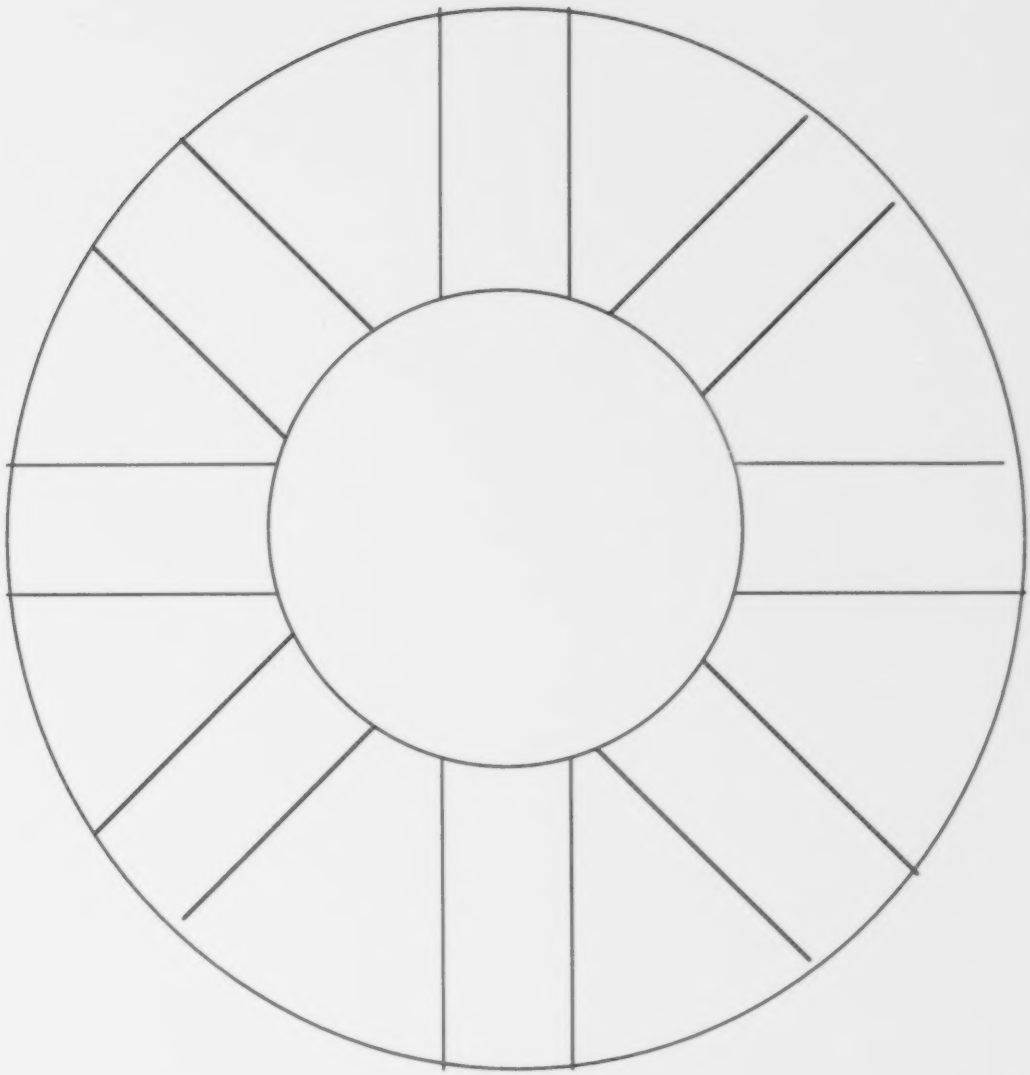
Draw picture of yourself wearing your favorite clothes in the frame. On the lines, describe why these clothes make you feel good about yourself.

RAGGEDY GIRL

There's a raggedy girl in raggedy clothes
With snarly hair and a runny nose
And she lives in a raggedy person's kind of place.
We're both of us about the same size.
We've both got bangs and dark brown eyes.
We've both got freckles polka-dotting our face.
But I go home to cookies and milk,
And a cozy comforter soft as silk,
And she foes where it's scary and sad to be.
Is this an accident? Was it planned?
Can somebody help me understand
Why the raggedy girl should be her, And I should be me?



CHARACTER WHEEL



Note: Glue this on poster board for sturdier wheel. You may punch a hole in it and hang it from a string.

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Respect / Tolerance

Groupings: Cooperative groups

Materials: Video-"Respect Yourself and Others too" by Sunburst, Three Plusses and a Wish sheet (one per group)

Action Plan:

- Agree on two rules for respecting each others property
- Brainstormed two encouraging put-ups
- Post put-ups on board to be presented to whole group
- Role play creative situations involving respect and disrespect

Processing: Present solutions to role play situations and process with Three Plusses and a Wish sheet

Three Plusses and a Wish

Your Name:

_____

Topic:

_____

+

+

+

Wish

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Respect / Tolerance

Groupings: Large group, then groups of three

Materials: Oliver Button is a Sissy by Tomie de Paola, worksheets

Action Plan:

- Read Oliver Button Is a Sissy in a large group
- Discuss respect and tolerance as relates to the story in a large group
- Break students up into groups of three where they will work on sheet relating to the story

Processing: Meet back in a large group to discuss each individual group's answers and reactions to the story

Name_____

List 4 words that tell how you think Oliver felt when he was called a Sissy.

1.

2.

3.

4.

List 4 words that tell how Oliver felt when he saw "OLIVER BUTTON IS A STAR."

1.

2.

3.

4.

How did the other children feel about Oliver Button at the end of the story?

What made them change their minds?

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Tolerance

Groupings: Groups of 2

Materials: Worksheet (copy for each student)
Book: The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by John Scieszeka

Action Plan:

- Read book to students
- Discuss how the wolf feels
- Give oral examples of when you need to accept others and their point of view
- Have children discuss with their partners what they would do in those situations

Processing: Children complete their own worksheets and then share answers with group

There Are So Many Ways to be Friendly

Name:_____

1 **Your friend comes over to your house to play.**

_____

- - - -

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Respect

Groupings: Whole group

Materials: Story Two Good Friends by Judith Delton

Action Plan:

- Read book
- Discuss what it means to respect someone, how do you show respect?, how did the children in the story respect each other?
- Make a list of respectful things

Processing: Share lists and then discuss- do we do these things that were on our lists?

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Respect

Groupings: Whole class, then groups of 3-4

Materials: Role play scenarios (copy for each student)

Action Plan:

- We discussed what it meant to be respectful, why we should respect people, who we should respect, and respecting property
- Give each group a scenario demonstrating respect
- Students have about 5-10 minutes to prepare the scenario
- Students present their role play to the rest of the class

Processing: Whole class discussion after we were done with each scenario role play about how the presenters were showing respect and what else they could have said or done.

Rules for role play:

- •Keep the role play brief-two or three minutes is often enough
- •Guard against self-disclosure-stop action if inappropriate involvement
- •Follow-up-discuss each role and possible switch actors or use new ones

ROLE PLAY

Here is a selection of role plays. You or your students may think of others.

1. Your grandmother brought you a present for your birthday. As soon as you start to unwrap it, you can tell it's a toy for babies. Your grandmother is waiting to see how you like it. What can you so? How can you show respect for your grandmother?

2. You're at your friends house for dinner. Your friend's mother sets your plate in front of you. It's meatloaf. What can you do? How can you show respect for your friend's mother.

3. Your friend's teams in the soccer finals. He invites you to go with him to the game and watch. You really hate watching soccer and you don't want to go. What can you do? How can you show respect for your friend?

4. Jim invited Robert over to play with his new video game. They played for hours. Robert asked if he could take the game home for the night and Jim said yes. But Robert forgot to bring the game to school the next morning. When Jim went home with Robert to get the game he found Robert's younger brother, Steve, playing with it. "I didn't say he could play with it," Jim yelled at Robert. "Now I'm never going to let you take one of my games home!"

5. Sarah and Jennifer plan to practice gymnastics together after school at Sarah's house. When their friend Nancy sees them leaving school together, she asks to come along. They explain that they've planned this date for a week and they need to practice their routines. Nancy says, "That's okay. I can watch." "I'm sorry," Sarah says, "we don't want to make you feel bad, but we planned it this way, just the two of us. We can do something together tomorrow, okay?"

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Responsibility

Groupings: Whole group, then individual

Materials: Story: Frank and Ernest by Alexandra Day, fill in responsibility sheets (one per student) to make individual books

Action Plan:

- Read Frank and Ernest to the whole group
- Talk about Frank's and Ernest's responsibilities
- Discuss childrens' own responsibilities at home and at school
- Children make their own "I Am Responsible" books

Processing: Each child shares his/her responsibility book. We then compared and contrasted all the things we were responsible for.

I am responsible for

_____

. . . . . .

_____

I am responsible for

_____

. . . . . .

_____

I am responsible for

_____

- -

_____

I am responsible for

myself!!!

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Responsibility

Groupings: Individual, then Cooperative groups of 5

Materials: People Search Sheets, poem: "Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout", by Shel Silverstein, Where the Sidewalk Ends, problem-solving frame, processing sheets (one per group)

Action Plan:

- Students individually do a people search
- Cooperative groups discuss examples of responsibility
- Bibliotherapy-have students read poem "Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout" in cooperative groups
- Complete problem solving frame (graphic organizer)
- Whole group sharing

Processing: Use graphic organizer for processing work in cooperative group. Predict ideas for future group work.

SARAH CYNTHIA SYLVIA STOUT
WOULD NOT TAKE THE GARBAGE OUT

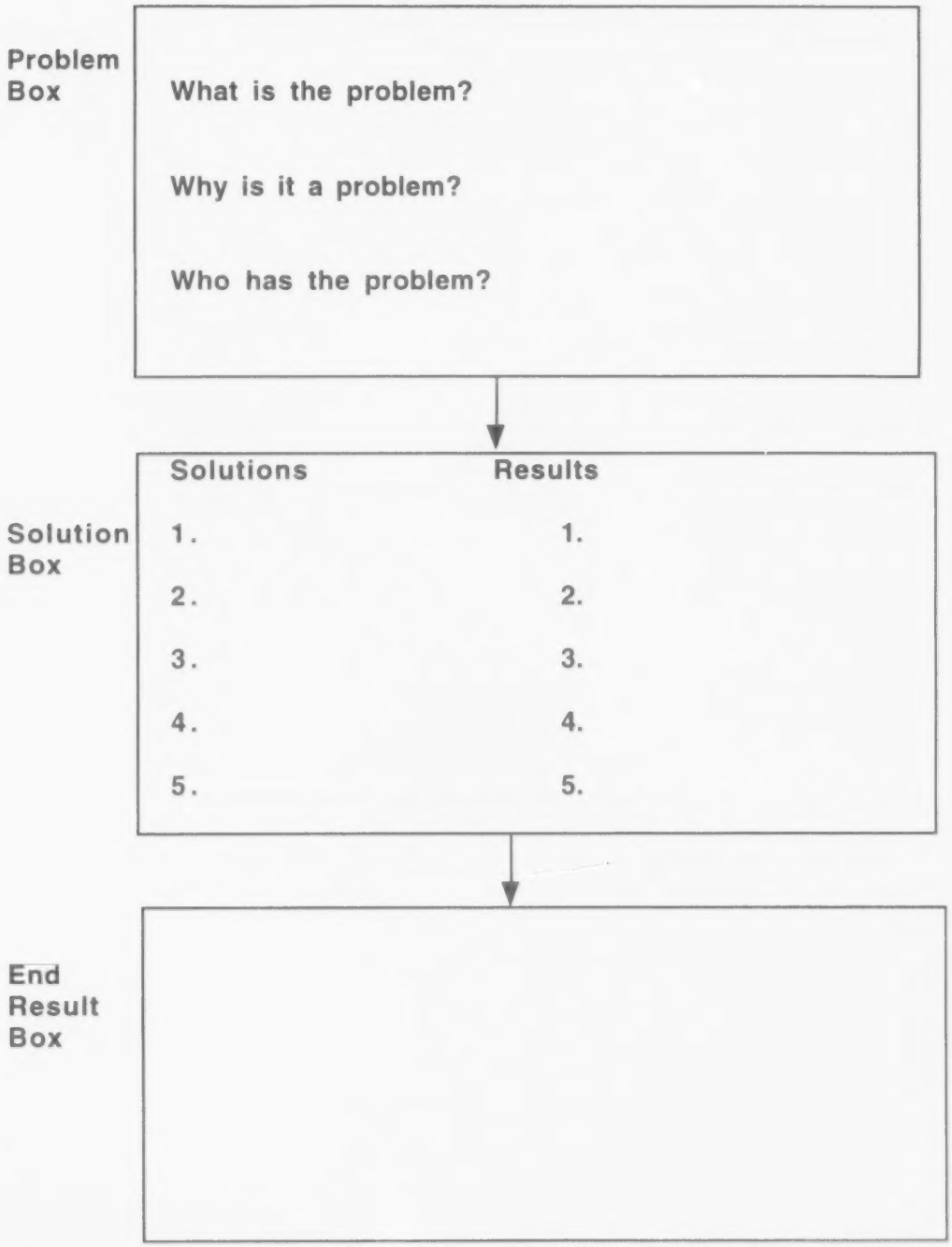
Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout
Would not take the garbage out!
She'd scour the pots and scrape the pans,
Candy the yams and spice the hams,
And though her daddy would scream and shout,
She simply would not that the garbage out.
And so it piled up to ceiling:
Coffee grounds, potato peeling,
brown bananas, rotten pea,
Chunks of sour cottage cheese.
It filled the can, it covered the floor,
It cracked the window and blocked the door
With bacon rinds and chicken bones,
Drippy ends of ice cream cones,
Prune pits, peach pits, orange peel,
Gloppy glumps of cold oatmeal,
Pizza crusts and withered greens,
Soggy beans and tangerines,
Crusts of black burned buttered toast,
Gristly bits of beefy roasts...
The garbage rolled on down the hall,
It raised the roof and broke the wall...
Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs,
Globs of gooey bubble gum,
Cellophane from green baloney,
Rubbery blubbery macaroni,
Peanut butter, caked and dry,
Curdled milk and crusts of pie,
Moldy melons, dried-up mustard,
Eggshells mixed with lemon custard,
Cold french fries and rancid meat,
Yellow lumps of Cream of Wheat.
At last the garbage reached so high
That finally it touched the sky.
And all the neighbors moved away.
And none of her friends would come to play.
And finally Sarah Cynthia Stout said,
"OK, I'll take the garbage out!"
But then, of course, it was to late...
The garbage reached across the state,
From New York to the Golden Gate.
And there, in the garbage she did hate,
Poor Sarah met an awful fate,
That I cannot right now relate
Because the hour is much too late.
But children, remember Sarah Stout
And always take the garbage out

People Search

Find a person who:

does volunteer work	is responsible for taking the trash out
almost never makes excuses for themselves	mows the lawn or shovels snow
cleans his or her own room	does their homework regularly, <u>without</u> reminders
has <u>no</u> family or household responsibilities	has <u>never</u> said, "He made me do it!" or "She made me do it!"

Problem Solution Frame



On the back, draw a picture or write about Sarah's fate.

Group_____

1 Hardly at all **2** Some of the time **3** Most of the time

We used a three inch voice_____

We used idea from every group member_____

We used encouraging words._____

Groups members:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Next time we work together we hope to_____

_____

_____

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Responsibility / Work Ethic

Groupings: Cooperative groups

Materials: Work Ethic Questionnaire, paper, markers

Action Plan:

- Discuss individual definitions of work ethic on overhead
- Circle commonalities
- Identify people who demonstrate work ethic, for example: Abraham Lincoln, Michael Jordan, Mom, Dad

Processing: In a whole group, choose the top five elements from the work ethic definition list and the top five people who exhibit these work ethic qualities.

WORK ETHIC

Name

With the help of your parents, write your definition for work ethic. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name some familiar (family, famous) people who you feel demonstrate a good work ethic according to your definition.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Responsibility

Groupings: Whole class, then individual

Materials: Spider web (copy for each student), markers, scissors,glue

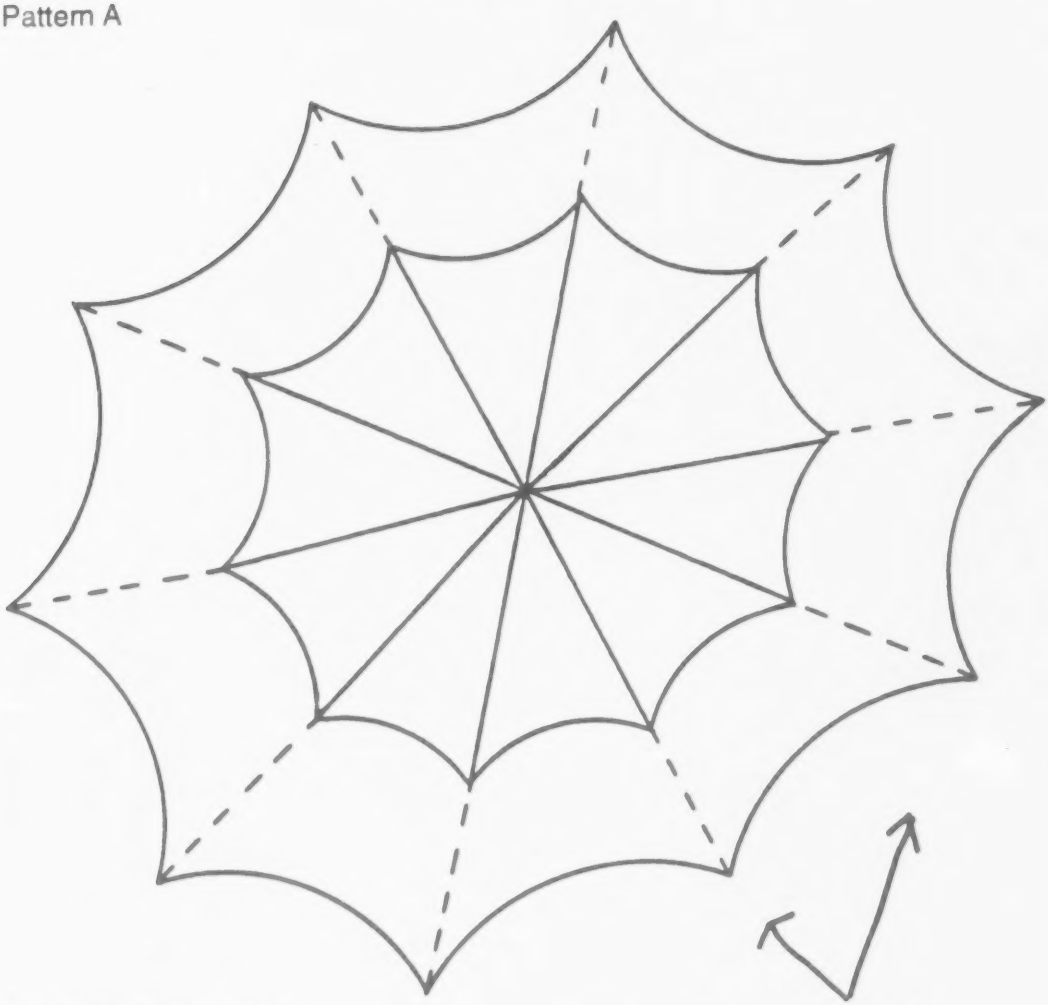
Action Plan:

- Have a whole class discussions on what the students may be responsible for and what that means
- The students then write 6 things they are responsibility for inside a large spider web
- Color or decorate the spider web
- Cut out the web and glue to paper

Processing: Students present their spider webs to the rest of the class after everyone has completed the task, explaining what they are responsible for in their lives.

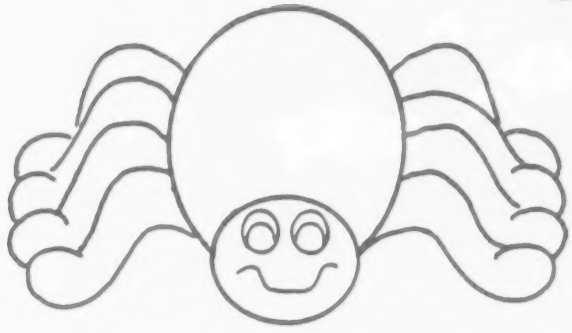
SPIDER WEB PATTERN

Pattern A

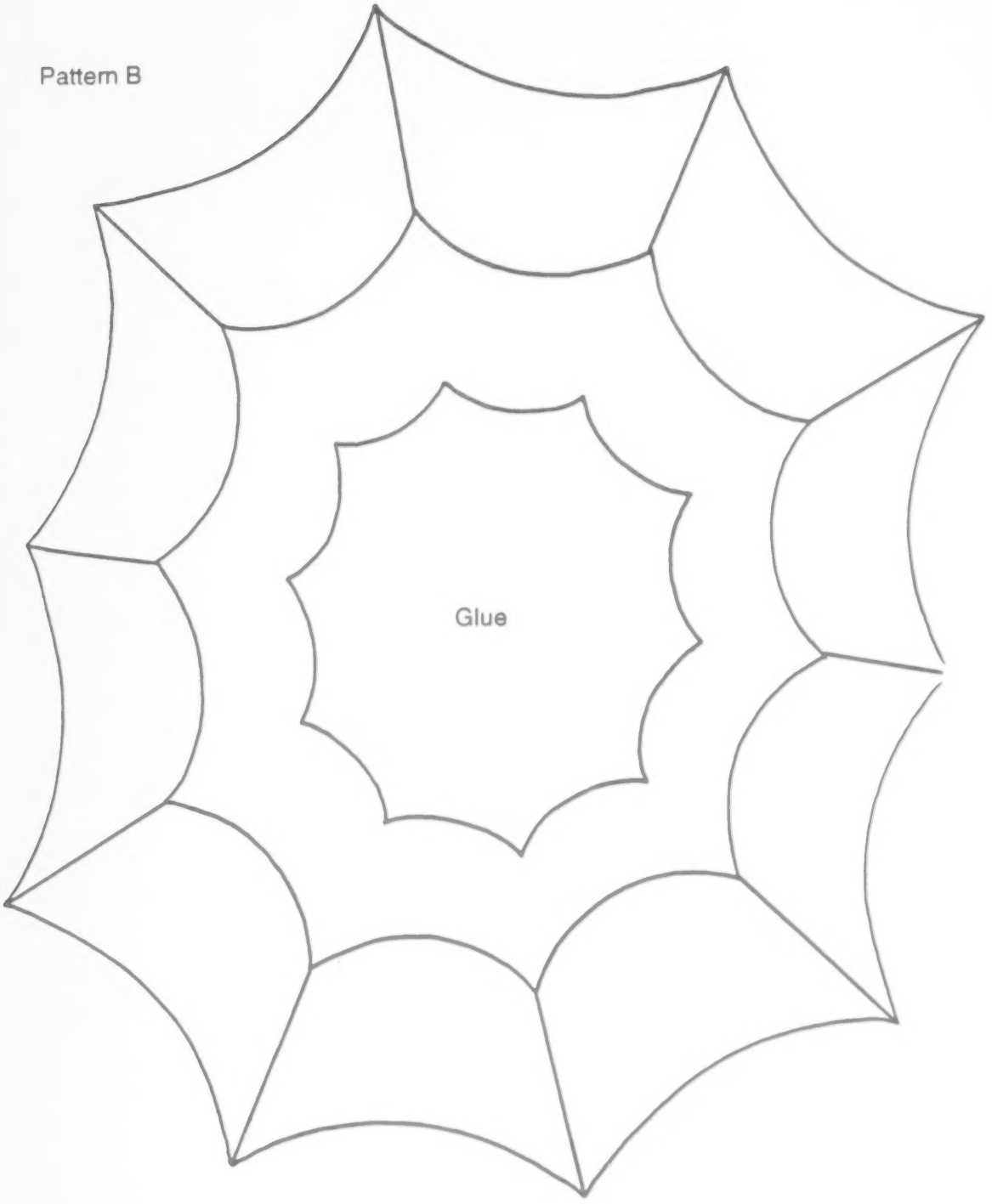


Cut along dotted lines

tabs



Pattern B



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Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Work Ethic

Groupings: Whole group, then cooperative groups of 3-4

Materials: Story: The Ant and the Grasshopper by Walt Disney, Mrs. Potter's Question sheets (one per group)

Action Plan:

- Read aloud the selection to the whole group
- In cooperative groups discuss, did the ants make the right decision?
- Write a different ending to this story
- Role play

Processing: Have each group fill out Mrs. Potter's Questions sheets and discuss.

Mrs. Potter's Questions

- What were you expected to do?

- In this assignment, what did you do well?

- If you had to do this task over, what would you do differently?

- What help do you need from me?

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Respect

Groupings: Four teams of five students with random assignment

Materials: Two scooters, long ropes, 2 frisbees, deck ring and large foam ball for each team

Action Plan:

- Students are instructed to use any equipment provided, but end with everything on the far side on the river. The river is the width of the gym and when any team member steps in the "water" the entire team needs to start over.
- There are several solutions to this problem and teams can solve it in any methods they choose provided they follow the rules.
- Students need instruction in listening and respecting other student's opinions and ideas, to try or experiment with solutions and work together for a common goal

Processing: When time is up or activity is finished team processing will include:

How did your team solve the problem?
Did you successfully cross the river?
How did you show respect?
What helped your team work together?
What would you do differently?

TEAM EVALUATION

River Crossing: Your group must get across the designated area(river) using the equipment provided, having all the equipment and people on the other side of the river to complete the task. No one may touch the inside of the river, equipment may. Complete the team evaluation when you have finished.

Score	1	2	3	4
Cooperation				
Conflicts resolved				
Encouragement/Compliments				
Utilized all team members				
Team Hustle				

Scoring:1--Unsatisfactory 2--Needs improvement 3--Met the requirement
4--outstanding/beyond the requirements

Lesson Plan

Theme of the month: Responsibility/Work Ethic

Groupings: Groups were designed by the teacher to provide maximum efficiency and safety in tumbling.

Materials: Tumbling mats

Action Plan:

- The curriculum is Acrosport, a group tumbling performance sport. Students work together to build pyramids, structures and cooperative tumbling.
- Teams need to involve all members all the time, even if spotting is the assignment.
- Emphasis on working on task as a team, accepting responsibility for your assignment and acting as a unit.

Processing: View video of performance. The class then analyzes skills, team work, involvement and amount of practice.

LOOKING BACK

Now that the activity is over, think about these questions and write your answers. Use the back of you need more space.

1. What were you expected to do?

_____

_____

_____

2. What did you do well?

_____

_____

_____

3. What would you do differently if you had to do the task over?

_____

_____

_____

Name_____

Appendix G

BIBLIOTHERAPY

COMPROMISE

Thomas' Snowsuit	Robert Munsch
Let's Be Enemies	Janice May Urdy
Three Wishes	Lucille Clifton
Honey Hunters	Francesca Martin
Matthew and Tilly	Rebecca C. Jones
The Owl and the Woodpecker	Brian Wildsmith
The Pig War	Betty Bake
It's Mine!	Leo Lionni
The Quarreling Book	Charollette Zolotow
Who's In Rabbit's House	Verna Ardema
The Knight and the Dragon	Tomie de Paola
Babar and the Wully-Wully	Laurent DeBrunhoff
Clancy's Coat	Eve Bunting
First Pink Light	Eloise Greenfield
Six Crows	Leo Lionni
The Terrible Thing That Happened at My House	Marge Blaine
Bootsie Barker Bites	Barbara Bottner
The Butter Battle	Dr. Seuss
Mr. and Mrs. Muddle	Hoberman
Strega Nona	Tomie de Paola

TOLERANCE

The Hating Book	Charolette Zolotow
Tar Beach	Faith Ringold
Here Comes the Cat!	Frank Asche and Vladmir Vagin
The Chinese Mirror	Mirra Ginsburg
The True Story of the 3 Pigs	John Scieszeka
The Island of the Skog	Steven Kellog
Angel Child Dragon Child	Michelle Maria Surat
The Kid in the Red Jacket	Barbara Parks
Amazing Grace	Mary Hoffman
Fredrick	Leo Lionni
All the Animals Were Angry	William Wondriska
Clive Eats Alligators	Alison Lester
How My Parents Learned to Eat	Ina Friedman
Oliver Button is a Sissy	Tomie de Paola

Ben and Me	Robert Lawson
The Phantom of the Opera	Gaston Leroux/Kate McMullen

RESPECT

Ty's One Man Band	Mildred Pitts Walter
A Chair for My Mother	Vera Williams
Teammates	Peter Golenbock
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughter	John Steptoe
Two Good Friends	Judith Delton

RESPONSIBILITY

Frank and Ernest	Alexandra Day
The Best Mom in the World	Judith Oelton
Jimmy Lee Did It	Pat Cummings
The Lion Upstairs	Stephen Krensky
My Side of the Mountain	Jean C. George
Tuck Everlasting	Natalie Gray
Shades of Gray	Carolyn Reeder
Incredible Journey	Shelia Burnford
Sarah Sylvia Cynthia Stout	Shel Silverstein

COURAGE

The Orphan Train Quartet	Lois Lowry Nixon
Island of the Blue Dolphins	Scott O'Dell
Call It Courage	Armstrong Sperry
Freedom Train	Dorothy Tubman
Tree of Freedom	Rebecca Caudal
Paul Revere's Ride	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
Shades of Gray	Carolyn Reeder
Number the Stars	Lois Lowry Nixon
The Giver	Lois Lowry Nixon
Sybil Ludington	Erick Berry
Toliver's Secret	Ester Wood Brady

Appendix H

Tallied Results of Social Skills Ckecklists

Student Self Evaluation of Social Skills	August	February
rarely	0	0
occasionally	2	1
half the time	14	8
often	53	49
almost always	20	31

Parent Checklist of Student Social Skills	August	February
rarely	0	0
occasionally	3	2
half the time	15	8
often	30	35
almost always	7	18